

Where we have made a commitment, fulfilled over a period of years—

by nearly 80%, while the Administration's fiscal year 2000 budget only requested a .07% increase which is less than an adjustment for inflation.

Remember what happens. Schools are being told by the Federal Government: You must comply with IDEA. You must provide the special education. The schools are saying: But if we spend that money and you do not do your share, it means we have to take from somewhere else.

The most difficult thing the schools across this country are having to deal with is complying with special education requirements and the Federal Government not doing its share. That is what our resolution focuses on. We should give schools the flexibility to use this money to comply with IDEA or use it in other areas.

Congress is not only providing the necessary funds, but is also reforming our current education programs. Congress recognizes that significant reforms are needed in light of the following troubling statistics:

40% of fourth graders cannot read at the most basic level.

In international comparisons, U.S. twelfth graders scored near the bottom in both math and science.

70% of children in high poverty schools score below even the most basic level of reading.

In math, 9 year olds in high poverty schools remain two grade levels behind students in low poverty schools.

Earlier this year, the 106th Congress took the first step toward improving our nation's schools by passing the Education, Flexibility and Partnership Act . . .

Really simple: We just allow the schools at the local level to make the decisions where to spend all this Federal money that is going to be available to them. Really simple. It will work. And the teachers and the Governors and the parents say, yes, that makes sense.

This year's reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act will focus on increasing student achievement by empowering principals, local school boards, teachers, and parents. The focus should be on raising the achievement of all students.

In other words, we say: We are going to give you the flexibility, but we expect results. You are going to have to show some results.

Also:

Congress should reject a one-size-fits-all approach to education.

What is good in Boston, MA, just may not be good in Boise, ID, or in Laramie, WY, or certainly not good in Pascagoula, MS. We have different needs. We ought to have that flexibility to address the needs we do have.

Parents are the first and best educators of their children. We have to find ways for the Congress to support proposals which provide parents greater, not less, control and input into the unique educational opportunities we want for our children.

Every child should have an exceptional teacher in the classroom.

We have a program in Mississippi—I am trying to remember who did it—but

a philanthropist gave every classroom in Mississippi, or at least every school, a computer. I was talking to a local educator recently. He said: That's real nice, but in many of those schools, those computers are still sitting in the boxes in the hallways or in the backs of the rooms because the teachers don't know how to use the computers, let alone how to teach the use of the computers.

Technology is great. We have to make sure, though, that the teachers have the ability or at least can be trained or have access to training so they can use the modern technology.

Our whereas goes on. It just says that Congress will continue its efforts to improve the Nation's schools by reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, guided by the principles I have been referring to above; that is, more flexibility, more control by the teachers and the school boards, and more involvement by the parents.

We feel very strongly about this. The Democrats say: We will provide 100,000 teachers, hired by the Federal Government, and we want to start repairing roofs.

The quality of the buildings themselves and repairing roofs are a local issue. The Federal Government should not be doing that. While others will say, well, wait a minute, we need to help these schools and these States in repairing buildings, where does it end? If we proceed down the road where we start paying for building schools at the local level, we will have to build every school in America. That is where it will end. Sure, it is nice; people like it.

Let me tell my colleagues about the States. Every single State in the Nation has a surplus, more than they are going to spend. You say, well, maybe it is not much. It is almost \$34 billion. If you have dilapidated schools in your State, I say: State, fix them. The Federal Government, Uncle Sop, is not going to pay for repairing roofs in Biloxi, MS. Let the people in Biloxi, in the State of Mississippi, do that. I am for it. I am for teacher pay raises, but the answer is not in this hallowed city that we stand. The answer is with the American people. I believe that. Give them the flexibility. When Senator KENNEDY said, basically, what we want is for Washington to run the schools, frankly, a bad situation could be worse. The Federal Government would mess it up.

So we have an alternative. We will be debating it again on Monday. I believe our alternative will pass. It should pass. But I am telling you right now, I am telling the President of the United States, William Jefferson Clinton, and I am telling everybody in this Senate, when it comes to education, TRENT LOTT is not going to yield to anybody, and the Republicans in Congress are not going to be run over by a bunch of additional Federal programs that will waste the money, should not be our responsibility, and will not get the job

done. We are going to make it flexible. We are going to make it local.

This is going to be an interesting debate. I can tell you one thing: I am going to be at the debate because I am going to be involved in this. I care about it, and I know what will work, and I know what won't work. What we have is not working. We have to do it differently.

I beg the pardon of my colleagues for getting fired up and going on a little long, but I am not going to let those sorts of things be said on the floor of the Senate on education without an adequate response.

I yield the floor, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The resolution will be received and appropriately referred.

The Chair recognizes the Senator from Georgia.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Mr. CLELAND. Mr. President, it has been marvelous to listen to the eloquence of the distinguished Senator on the high-tech environment of Duck Hill, MS. It reminds me of my own educational background in Lithonia, GA, at little Lithonia Elementary School there. I worshiped my second- and third- and fourth-grade, fifth-grade teachers, too. But by no means do I want to go back to those days in 1953 and 1954.

This is 1999. We are fixing to go into a new millennium and a new century. I am afraid this country is about to go into this new century, with great opportunity ahead of it, with minimal opportunity for our citizens to take advantage of it.

Bill Gates, who has become pre-eminent as a thinker and an innovator, and certainly one who is interested in the cause of education, has put it clearly. He said: It is clear that our ability to continue benefiting from technology will largely depend on how well we educate the next generation to take advantage of this new era.

I don't think anyone really questions the wisdom of Mr. Gates. The challenge, of course, is to live up to that challenge Mr. Gates has put before us. He not only talks the talk; he walks the walk. Last week, Bill Gates pledged to spend \$1 billion to provide college scholarships to thousands of deserving but financially needy students across the country. This gift is the largest individual contribution to education in history. We can learn something from the leadership our business leaders around America are now showing. I think the Senate leadership can learn something.

We are only 4 months away from the year 2000. We must not forget the future of this country is in very small hands. Yet despite all the rhetoric, the great speeches, and the fact that three out of four Americans in the latest Washington Post/ABC poll put improving education No. 1 on the national agenda, what we see here in the agenda

of the Senate is a desire to raid the education pot to pay for other programs higher up on someone else's national agenda.

How do I say that? If the words of our distinguished majority leader are true and the tremendous commitment he has shown on the floor today is actually true, then I wonder why the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education of the Committee on Appropriations of this great Senate has reduced the money for education by 17 percent over last year's levels. If all this rhetoric is really true, why are we, in the background, in some subcommittee on appropriations, cutting 17 percent out of education funding from last year?

I agree with the words of Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli, the great British Prime Minister of the last century, when he said for his countrymen in that century words that ring true for us as we go into a new century. He said: Upon the education of the people of this country, the fate of this country depends.

If I had to sum up our challenge as a Nation—and I am on the Armed Services Committee, and I know we are challenged in our military defense of this great Nation—I would say to you, without an educated workforce, without an educated defense force, we cannot compete in the world, either economically or in terms of our own defense.

The sad part about it is, every day in America almost 2,800 high school students drop out. The United States, once the leader in high school graduation among industrialized nations, now trails 22 nations and leads only 1, Mexico. This is not acceptable. This will not get us where we want to go in the next century. Each school year, more than 45,000 underprepared teachers, teachers who have not even been trained in the subjects they are teaching, enter the classroom. Who here among us believes this to be acceptable? I don't. Most fourth graders cannot read and understand a simple children's book, and most eighth graders can't use arithmetic to solve a practical problem—that according to a recent survey in Education Week. Who would argue in this body we have to do better?

Last year, there were 4,000 reports of rape and sexual battery in America's public schools. We have had an outbreak of violence in the schools. Remember Littleton, Jonesboro, Conyers? School shootings were unheard of in this Nation 20 years ago. Who here would not do everything in their power to restore safety and sanity to America's schools?

The truth is, Democrats and Republicans alike have to raise this to the top of our agenda. It is time to put education first and put first things first. We have to be willing to invest in the Nation's future, improve the recruitment and retention of professional teachers.

We have to improve our test scores, although that is not, in my opinion, the single-most important goal of our public educational system. The most important goal is to teach kids to think. I remember a story about Bill Gates. Out in Seattle, his mother went out in the garage where Bill was and said, "Son, what are you doing?" He said, "Mother, I'm thinking." That is the goal of our public educational system.

The Public Schools Excellence Act recognizes America's ability to attract and retain qualified teachers is key to quality education. S. 7, of which I am a cosponsor, would provide local school districts with the help and support they need to recruit excellent teacher candidates. I agree, the States are the leaders in educational improvement. They have to be. I was a State official, with 4 years in the State senate and 12 years as secretary of state. I spent more time as a State official than I have as a Federal official. But it is obvious, a lot of our school systems in our States can't get to where we need them to be without some Federal help. Who would deny that?

We need 100,000 new, trained, qualified teachers in this country. One reason is to reduce class size in grades 1 through 3. Every index I have seen of student performance—and part of the key to student excellence and achievement is the reduction of the pupil-teacher ratio, particularly in grades 1 through 3. No matter how you cut it, a teacher with 10 or 15 students in the class, regardless of where those teachers and students are—what State, what district, what county—they learn more and do better than a teacher who has 30 or 35 kids in the class.

We have another problem: 14 million children in the U.S.A. attend schools in need of extensive repair or replacement. I come from a State that is fast-growing, and it is hard to build enough classrooms, particularly in Metropolitan Atlanta. If you look around my State, a recent survey pointed out that in Georgia some 62 percent of our classroom buildings need repair. We have had legislation on the floor of the Senate to deal with this. We have not dealt with it.

There is another issue. Every day, 5 million children have to care for themselves in the hours before and after school. When I was growing up, in my hometown of Lithonia, when I came home—and my mother and father were working—my grandmother was there. I was not a latchkey kid. The truth is, in that key time period from 3 o'clock to 8 o'clock at night, half of all the violent juvenile crime in this country takes place. This is a key period for our youngsters in America. Why can't we help out?

Today, only a virtual handful of children participate in good afterschool care. Let's not cut educational funding from what it was last year by 17 percent. Let's not let this subcommittee, behind our backs, cut the feet out from

under us as we make great speeches on the floor of how many of us support education.

Let us actually take a lesson from Bill Gates: Let us help our communities reduce juvenile crime by investing our dollars in afterschool care. That is one of the challenges before us and one of the programs that was cut by the subcommittee.

Let me say also that I think we ought to take the words of Benjamin Disraeli to heart as we enter this debate next week, as it is a truism: "An investment in education is an investment in the future of America."

I yield the floor.

Mr. ROTH addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the Senator from Delaware.

ADMIRAL KIMMEL AND GENERAL SHORT

Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss an important—a historically important—vote taken in the course of our recent deliberations on defense policy. I am speaking of the rollcall vote this Chamber took on May 25 requesting the long-overdue, posthumous advancement of two fine World War II officers, Adm. Husband Kimmel and Gen. Walter Short. The Senate voted in support of the Kimmel-Short resolution, and I wish to take a moment to underscore the historic import of that vote.

As you may recall, Admiral Kimmel and General Short were publicly and wrongly accused of dereliction of duty and unfairly scapegoated with singular responsibility for the success of the fateful December 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor.

After the end of World War II, this scapegoating was given a painfully unjust and enduring veneer when Admiral Kimmel and General Short were not advanced on the retired lists to their highest ranks of war-time command—an honor that was given to every other senior commander who served in war-time positions above his regular grade.

After over 50 years, this injustice remains a prominent, painful spur in the integrity of our Nation's military honor. After numerous official investigations totaling well over 30 volumes of thick text absolved these officers of dereliction of duty and highlighted gross negligence and ineptitude on the part of their superiors as predominant factors in the Pearl Harbor disaster, these officers still remain unfairly treated.

For those of you who are interested, I will shortly send to the desk for placement in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD a set of excerpts from these investigations. This is a short document, but it poignantly highlights how unjust treatment endured by Kimmel and Short just does not correlate with the official history—the official documented history—of the Pearl Harbor disaster.